



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOJ OIG Releases an Inspection of the BOP's Federal Detention Center SeaTac

Department of Justice (DOJ) acting Inspector General William M. Blier announced today the release of an inspection of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' (BOP) Federal Detention Center (FDC) SeaTac in Seattle, Washington. FDC SeaTac is an administrative-security federal detention center housing both female and male inmates. The on-site inspection, which occurred December 9–December 12, 2024, was the twelfth unannounced inspection under the DOJ Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) on-site BOP inspections program.

The DOJ OIG identified several serious issues at FDC SeaTac related to inmate healthcare quality, institution-wide staffing, and contraband interdiction. Notably, substantial shortages of healthcare employees and Correctional Officers—an issue at many BOP institutions—have created widespread and troubling operational challenges at FDC SeaTac that substantially affect the health, welfare, and safety of employees and inmates. Our findings include:

- **Significant Staffing Shortages.** At the time of our inspection, FDC SeaTac's Correctional Services Department was staffed at only 69 percent and its Health Services Department was staffed at only 50 percent. Notably, the Clinical Director position had been vacant for at least 18 months, only three of nine nursing positions were filled, and only one of the two pharmacist positions was filled. FDC SeaTac's Health Services Department leadership described the healthcare situation at the institution as a "crisis" that required the institution to prioritize the provision of emergency care to inmates and was a significant driver for many of the issues regarding inmate healthcare. Additionally, the shortage of Correctional Officers required the institution to adopt stopgap measures that contributed to low morale and exhaustion among employees. This ultimately impeded the institution's ability to house inmates at full capacity.
- **Serious Issues with FDC SeaTac's Provision of Healthcare to Its Inmates.** There were delays in treating both routine and serious inmate health conditions, delays in health intake screenings, a backlog of 480 laboratory orders affecting FDC SeaTac's ability to monitor inmates with chronic conditions, and a lack of preventive healthcare screenings. We also found several unsafe medication administration and management practices, in addition to unsanitary and disorganized conditions in Health Services Department areas, that undermined the quality of healthcare at FDC SeaTac and posed risks to both employees and inmates.
- **Two Safety and Security Issues Affecting the Safety of Institution Operations.** Correctional Officers did not consistently complete all inmate-monitoring rounds as required by policy, which increases the risk of inmate self-harm, violence toward employees or other inmates, and other illicit



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activities. Additionally, FDC SeaTac employees did not conduct random pat searches of employees across all shifts and exempted visiting attorneys entering the institution from pat searches and other security measures required by BOP policy. These security measures are designed to mitigate the risk that illegal drugs and other dangerous contraband are introduced into the institution.

The OIG made 11 recommendations to ensure effective operations at FDC SeaTac and safe conditions of confinement for the inmates housed there. The majority of the recommendations relate to the quality of healthcare provided to FDC SeaTac inmates and the medical care issues we identified. These recommendations are consistent with requirements outlined in the recently passed Federal Prison Oversight Act. The BOP agreed with all of the recommendations.

Report: Today's report is available on [the OIG's website](#).

Video: To accompany today's report, the OIG has released a 4-minute video of the acting Inspector General discussing the report's findings. The video and a downloadable transcript are available [on our website](#).

Photos: High-resolution versions of the photos included in today's report are available upon request.

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